

Combat Add-On for Magical Girl CYOA

(A Vague Exalted Hack)

Version 1.0 by Jayne Bartowski

The Core Mechanic: The D10

All rolls in this system are rolls of a pool of one or more d10, with a binary outcome for each die. In most cases, rolling a one to a six will result in the roll failing; likewise, rolling a seven, eight, nine, or ten will typically result in the roll's success, with a ten counting for double. Once you have rolled the dice, you discard the failures and add up the number of successes. This number is compared to the number you need to beat to succeed, which is either set by the Game Master in advance, or is determined by an opposed roll. If your successes match or exceed the number you need to beat, the task is accomplished, with the number of successes in excess determining how well you accomplish it.

Abilities: Your Bread and Butter

Each ability generated through the CYOA represents a facet of your character's physical and magical abilities: Strength, Agility, Vitality, Magic, and Luck. Strength represents how much physical force you can place behind your blows, and how much you can lift, carry and throw. Agility represents your physical precision, how skilled you are at delicate tasks, and how quickly you react to stimulus. Vitality is a measure of your toughness, hardiness, and healthiness; most importantly for this add-on, vitality has a direct effect on the amount of damage you can take before being wounded, or being taken out of the fight. Magic represents your innate magical talent and potency with your specialization and sorcery. Luck represents how often fortune smiles on you.

The value of your ability scores determine how many dice you roll when taking an action that uses that ability score, equal to half of your ability score, rounded up. When rolling a Strength Test, a Magical Girl with 6 STR would roll 3d10, while a Magical Girl with 7 STR would roll 4d10. The following provides some examples of what sort of actions are associated with each sort of test. This list is not exhaustive, simply examples.

Strength: Melee Attacks, Defending (Parry), Lifting Heavy Objects, Jumping Long Distances, Climbing

Agility: Ranged Attacks, Defending (Dodge), Initiative, Squeezing Through Tight Spaces, Balancing

Vitality: Running Long Distances, Holding Your Breath, Resisting Disease, Resisting Poisons

Magic: Specialization Use, Defending (Magic), Ritual Magic (Sorcery Only)

Luck: Resisting Curses, Defending (Luck), Finding Clues

Vitality, Magic, and Luck have the additional benefit of determining how large your Wound, Mana, and Fortune Pools are.

Your Wound Pool determines how many injuries the Magical Girl can take before she can no longer participate in combat – depending on the type of campaign being run, this could mean her death, or simply being knocked unconscious. The Wound Pool typically begins empty, and you can take a number of wounds equal to twice your Vitality Score.

Taking Wounds will eventually start to give you penalties, which stack up until you've taken enough to be knocked unconscious or killed. Each Wound Threshold represents 25% of your hitpoints – in the first threshold, you take no penalty. In the second, every action is rolled with one less die. In the third, that number increases to two, and in the fourth, that number increases to three. A Magical Girl with 6 Vitality who has taken 3 wounds will not take a penalty, though the next wound will knock her down; a Magical Girl with only 4 Vitality with the same amount of wounds would be taking a -1 penalty.

When you would normally be knocked out of combat, you may instead opt to take a permanent wound, rolling on the table below to determine what occurs. This is less useful on *Cake and Ice Cream* mode, where you would simply be knocked unconscious, but is useful for avoiding death on *Guns and Grim* mode. These permanent wounds range from mild to severe.

Roll	Wound Taken
1-2	Scarring on the chest
3-4	Scarring of a leg
5-6	Scarring of an arm
7-8	Scarring of the face
9-10	Loss of a Finger
11-12	Loss of a Toe
13-14	Loss of a Tooth
15-16	Loss of a Hand
17	Loss of a Foot
18	Loss of an Eye
19	Loss of an Arm
20	Loss of a Leg

Your Mana Pool determines how many spells the Magical Girl can cast using her Specialization; each use of her specialization typically costs one point of Mana, though you can augment the spell by spending more Mana. When full, your Mana Pool has a number of points equal to your Magic Score.

Your Fortune Pool determines how much fortune will smile upon you during the course of your adventures, in addition to any passive luck based abilities you receive from your Perks. Spending a point from this pool grants you two additional successes on the roll, as if you had rolled an extra die that came up on a 10. However, you can only use one Luck Point on each test. When full, your Luck Pool has a number of points equal to your Luck Score.

Your Mana Pool refreshes after every combat encounter.

Your Fortune Pool refreshes at the beginning of every episode (typically one game session).

Your Wound Pool refreshes at a rate that depends the type of combat your game uses.

Combat: How You Pretty Beam

There are two modes to Combat: *Cake and Ice Cream*, and *Guns and Grim*

Cake and Ice Cream is the mode meant for the brighter, happier magical girl games in the vein of *Lyrical Nanoha*, *Sailor Moon*, and similar series. Running up your Wound Pool might mean being knocked out and kidnapped by a Monster Girl in the case of a Magical Girl, or being purified by the Magical Girls for a

Monster Girl. Death should only be narrative driven, not something casually handed out by the GM or the Players, and the violence in the game should be treated more like a contact sport than a war. At the end of the day, any wounds taken heal quickly, bringing the girls back to an empty pool at the beginning of each new episode.

Guns and Grim is meant for the grittier, darker magical girl games in the vein of *Puella Magi Madoka Magica* and series similar to it. Both Player Characters and NPCs die when their wound pool is filled, there's no way around that. Death and violence are not tools of drama in these games, they are simply inescapable facts of a Magical Girl's existence. Wounds also heal much more slowly than in *Cake and Ice Cream*, and extensive damage might lead to the player becoming permanently disabled. The default rate of wound healing is one Wound Threshold being erased at the beginning of each new episode.

Mechanically combat works the same in both systems, even if it is treated differently based on the genre of the game. It works on a turn based system, meaning that the first step in combat is to determine the order in which the players and their enemies act.

Rolling Initiative: Initiative is an Agility Test with no target number. The order of combat is determined by the number of successes rolled, with the highest going first and the lowest going last. If two Magical Girls have the same number of successes, the one with the greater Agility Score goes first. If that number is also tied, they make Opposed Agility Tests until one of them rolls higher than the other. Certain perks, powers, and specialties may affect a Magical Girl's initiative roll.

The Attack Action: Unless extreme distances are involved, movement is abstracted during the turn, and any movement the Magical Girl needs to take an action is considered a part of that action. A Magical Girl may choose to attack with their weapon, use their specialization. Attacking with a Melee Weapon requires a Strength Test; attacking with a Ranged Weapon requires an Agility Test; and using your Specialization in any form or attacking with a Mystic Weapon requires a Magic Test.

When attacking, you start by rolling the test that corresponds to the method of your assault, with any bonuses you may receive from Perks or Stunting. You may also choose to enhance your attack with magic, either by pouring more Mana into the spell, or by augmenting your weapon with your Magic. A Fire Specialist might light their weapon on fire, a Reinforcement Specialist might strengthen the material of their projectiles, or an Illusion Specialist might seek to confuse her enemy as to where the attack is coming from. Regardless, for each point of mana you use beyond those necessary to make the attack (if any), you made add 1 bonus die to the relevant test, to a maximum of 3 bonus die.

When using your Specialization, you roll a Magic Test – augmenting it with Perks, Stunting, or additional mana as usual. The result of that test becomes the target number that the enemies affected by the use of your power have to overcome to avoid its effects. Examples of this might be using Light or Darkness to blind a group of enemies, to create an Empathic Wave that overwhelms their minds with distracting thoughts, or to catch them in a sphere of water. Penalties inflicted on this can range from a -2 to -4 on their actions, or even removing the enemy from combat temporarily.

When directly attacking multiple targets, you take one penalty die for each target you are attacking in addition to the primary enemy. This does not apply to uses of a Specialization that target an entire area, though it should be noted that those spells can catch allies with friendly fire, forcing them to defend or take the same effect your opponents would suffer.

Once the attack is made, the enemy then defends. Using an Agility Test to dodge or a Luck Test to get out of the way are the two most versatile forms of Defense, being effective against both Magic and Physical Attacks. Using a Strength Test can only be used against melee physical attacks, but a successful Parry will deal one wound to the attacker as you take advantage of an opening. Similarly, a Magic Test can only defend against Mystic Attacks and uses of Magic, but a successful shield will absorb the energy of the attack, restoring one point to your Mana Pool.

If the attacker meets or exceeds the defender's attempt to defend, they deal one wound, plus an additional number of wounds equal to the difference between their Attack and the Opponent's Defense. The number of wounds dealt by the attack is reduced by the defender's Damage Reduction from her Outfit, though it can never be reduced lower than one wound. A Parry and a Magic Block are considered successful when the attacker does not meet or exceed this number. To give an example of how a round of combat might go down:

Magical Molly is facing down against her arch-rival, the infamous Pink Floozy! Being honorable warriors, and good friends outside their costumes, they begin the duel at twenty paces and wait for the sun to hit high noon. The moment it does, combat is on! Magical Molly has an Agility of 8, as does her opponent, so both of them roll 4d10.

Magical Molly rolls a 5, 9, 7, and 8, giving her three successes! But Pink Floozy rolls a 9, 8, 8, and 6, meaning they've tied. As they have the same Agility Score, they both roll again. This time, Molly beats her with a 3, 7, 10, and five, giving her three successes compare to Floozy's 3, 2, 3, and 6 which has none. Molly gets to go first.

Magical Molly is quick on the draw, pulling out her Pretty Pistol faster than the eye can follow! It's an Enhanced Weapon, and she has Martial Training, which together give her two extra dice on the attack roll. Just to be sure, she's to use her Beast Specialization to give herself a set of Eagle Eyes to guide her aim, expending two points from her Mana Pool to add another two dice. With all this, she'll be rolling 8d10 – for a 5, 6, 4, 3, 7, 10, 9, and 10, giving her a whopping 6 successes!

Pink Floozy does not like the look of that, no siree! She's no good at dodging, and her skimpy armor only provides her with 1 point of Damage Reduction... which is no worse than most other outfits, but still! She does have one thing going for her, though, and that's her outright stupid luck. With a Luck of 12, Floozy is going to use it to defend herself. What's more, she's going to use a point from her Fortune Pool to give herself a pair of automatic successes. With a 4, 1, 4, 8, 7, 2, and 4, that brings her up to 4 successes. Not enough for the bullet to miss completely, but enough that it only gives her one wound.

But now it's Pink Floozy's turn.

As a Dark Magical Girl, Pink Floozy possesses the Element of Bubblegum. She decides that she's going to use that element to gum up her arch-rival's hair... and the rest of her, too! Chewing feverishly, she blows a bubble almost three times the size of her body, and lets it pop all over Magical Molly, getting the sticky pink substance everywhere. With the Gifted Trait and 12 Magic, she'll be rolling 7 dice as a baseline – and channeling even more magic into it turns that up to 9! With a 4, 10, 7, 8, 8, 2, 2, and 10, that's seven successes, plenty to keep Molly pinned down for a while...

If she doesn't dodge it.

Molly rolls an agility check to dodge out of the way, using a point from her Luck Pool to add two successes. With a 1, 8, 9, and 9, that's not enough successes for her to keep from being covered in a torrent of thick, sticky pink goo. While being stuck in one place for a while isn't going to keep her from being able to hit Pink Floozy like it might for a melee character, it's enough to impose a penalty of -2 to her Agility checks until she pulls herself free. She's gonna need to use some monstrous strength to pull apart the trap, and even that might not be enough...

Other Actions: There are several other actions you can take during combat. Most of these actions are a function of your Powers and Perks, though there are some actions that everyone can take.

Hiding: You can spend your action to attempt to disappear from sight with an Agility Test with a target equal to the number of opponents you're facing. Use of the environment and certain applications of your specialization can give you a bonus on this roll, similar to boosting an attack. If successful, you are hidden until the end of your next turn.

Aid: You can spend your action to assist one of your allies next actions, granting them a 2 die bonus on action. The two of you must be working in tandem for this to work – when performing this action, you declare what you're helping them to do, as well as how you're helping them. If they do not perform the action you're assisting, your action is wasted for the round. You roll a test of your choice, and as long as you succeed on one of the rolls, this action is successful.

Retreat: You can spend your action attempting to beat a hasty retreat from battle with either an Endurance Test or a Strength Test with a target equal to the number of opponents you're facing. Use of the environment and certain applications of your specialization can give you a bonus on this roll, similar to boosting an attack. If successful, the encounter ends for you unless an enemy successfully uses the Pursue action.

Pursue: You can spend your action pursuing a fleeing enemy with either an Endurance Test or a Strength Test with a target equal to the number of successes your opponent had when using the Retreat action. Use of the environment and certain application of your specialization can give you a bonus on this roll, similar to boosting an attack. If successful, you prevent your opponent from Retreating from battle, keeping them in the encounter and forcing them to make another Retreat Test with the same Target Number as their previous one. This can only be used against an enemy who just used their action to Retreat.

Recharge: You can spend your action to center yourself and recharge you Mana Pool with the ambient natural energy of the world. Doing so leaves you vulnerable, taking a 2 die penalty on your defensive rolls until your next turn. This action recharges three points of Mana, regardless of how large your Mana Pool is.

Stunting: How to Be a Badass

Stunting is a system by which the GM rewards their players for coming up with creative, out of the box solutions to a problem they're facing, making their choices a part of their character development, or simply taking the time to say something beyond "I swing my sword at the enemy". The player describes their action, and the GM then rewards them with either one or two additional dice to be rolled during the relevant test. A good stunt should be more than a simple description of the Magical Girl's actions – and a great stunt should go even further – but should not go on so long that it breaks up the flow of the

game. Ultimately, it is up to the GM to decide whether or not a stunt is worth one or two bonus dice, with what follows as a sort of measuring stick.

Zero Point Stunt: These simply aren't stunts. Either they break up the pacing of the game, or they aren't detailed enough to be worth any bonus points. The following are examples of Zero Point Stunts:

"I attack the enemy with my sword!"

"I'll use my bubblegum magic to make an area too sticky to move through!"

"I shoot them with my bow."

"I guess I'll make a fireball over... there."

One Point Stunt: These stunts are low effort stunts, either by way of repeating a previous stunt verbatim or near verbatim, or by using a fairly minimal description of the action being taking. The following are examples of One Point Stunts:

"With my Tenshi-Ryu sword technique, I press the attack, not giving them a single moment to breath!"

"I blow a bubble the size of a car, letting it float towards my enemy, and then pop it with a thrown needle to cover the area with thick, sticky bubblegum!"

"I notch an arrow in my bow and take careful aim, only letting it fly when I'm sure I have a clean shot."

"With a snap of my fingers, I channel my fire magic into an explosion, smothering my foes in flame!"

Two Point Stunt: These stunts are what the players should be aiming to create when stunting, being more creative than the more rote One Point Stunts, but not so long winded that they disrupt the flow of the game. The following is an example of a Two Point Stunt:

"Using my Tenshi-Ryu sword technique, I press a relentless assault that doesn't give the enemy a second of respite. I guide their movements with my attacks, aiming to force them back against the wall, where they have no chance to escape."

Note that these guidelines are not hard and fast. A good stunt makes creative use of the environment, gives a detailed description of what the Magical Girl is doing, and is encouraged to use in-jokes at the table. For example, if it has become a running joke for the players to encourage someone to take the shot during a tense situation, prefacing something that would normally have been a One Point Stunt with "I take the shot" might make it a Two Point Stunt, depending on how frequently it has been used. The GM should arbitrate stunts carefully, to make sure none of them become rote.

Powers: Unlimited Powers!

This section details the mechanical effects of the Powers listed in the main document, where relevant.

Killing Blow: By spending three additional points of mana when augmenting your weapon's attack or spell's power, you may make a killing blow. You make the same test you make when attacking with your Magic Weapon, and if successful, the attack fills the opponents Wound Pool, instantly taking them out of the fight. You take a 2 dice penalty to your defensive rolls until your next turn after using this attack, and this penalty is doubled if the attack fails.

Hammerspace: Retrieving objects from this space is a non-action, though the objects always appear in your hand. Storing an object in also a non-action if the object is unattended. Storing an attended object takes a Magic Test that is opposed by a defense of your opponent's choice. You can store living things, but they get a 2 dice bonus to their defenses against your Magic Test, and can make a Magic Test every round to escape, where the Target Number is equal to half of your Magic Score, round up.

Familiar: A familiar is a creature of your choice with a 7 in every Ability Score. They do not possess a Specialization, Power, Fortune Pool, or Mana Pool, though they are always loyal to you and will give sound advice. Should your familiar die, you receive a 2 dice penalty to all rolls until you go through the grieving process and obtain a new one. You may choose one of the following perks for them:

Bestial Combat: Trained for combat, a familiar with this trait gains 2 bonus dice when making a melee attack.

Illusion Piercer: A wise familiar, the two of you can take an action in tandem to pierce an Illusion without taking a Magic Test.

Perfect Assistant: A familiar skilled in many things, they grant one extra bonus die when using the Aid Action on you.

Focused Assault: This powerful attack does not leave you vulnerable, but strikes with a significant amount of power that could be compared to a Killing Blow. When making an attack with your weapon or using your specialization to deal damage, you may spend 2 points of mana with the attack to make a Focused Assault. This attack, if successful, drops the target in one point into their next Wound Threshold, bypassing Damage Reduction.

Barrage: When making a damaging attack with either your Magic Weapon or your Specialization, you may opt to spend two points to make a Barrage, which is a normal attack that takes no penalty regardless of how many enemies you target in a single round.

Power of Friendship: Your Aid Action is twice as effective as normal when you use it to help out your friends. Likewise, your friends grant you one additional bonus die when they use their Aid Action on you. In addition, your magic is attuned to your friends, and they do not suffer from friendly fire by your wide area attacks, the spells doing little more than tickling them.

Duplication: As an Action, You can create one copy of yourself per point of Mana you spend on using this power. These copies have a duplication of your stats, save that they possess no Fortune Pool, can only take one wound before popping, and only possess one point of Mana, the use of which kills them once the action is resolved. These copies are indistinguishable from you to anyone who does not possess the Third Eye Power, and last until they are destroyed. When they are destroyed, you receive all of their memories and experiences.

Third Eye: You can instantly tell the difference between an Original and their Duplicates, and can see the bond between a Master and their Familiar. Offensives uses of Specializations take a 2 dice penalty when targeting you directly, and you are immune to illusionary effects that target you directly, including the use of Illusion Magic to augment a weapon's attack. You may use an Action to pierce through any Illusion in your sight – such as a veil of invisibility, or a mirror image.

Regeneration: You regenerate one wound and one point of mana at the beginning of your turn. You may use an action to speed this regeneration by expending 3 points from your Mana Pool to heal a number of wounds equal to your largest wound threshold.

Tentacles: You may use an Action to direct your tentacles to grapple a target, disabling them for one round and imposing a -2 penalty on their rolls until they escape from the tentacles. They may also be directed to pin down the target they have grappled with an Action, further binding your enemies to impose a -4 penalty. Once the target is pinned, the tentacles can be directed to move them, damage them, or otherwise antagonize them. Commanding the tentacles takes a Magic Test or a Luck Test.

Perks

This section details the mechanical effects of the Perks listed in the main document, where relevant.

Dual Weapon: Switching the weapon's form is a non-action; the weapon uses the appropriate test for the form it is in when you attack.

Martial Training: When attacking with your Magic Weapon, or a Mundane Weapon with a similar form, you gain one bonus die.

Enhanced Weapon: The superior construction of your weapon grants you one bonus die when attacking with it.

Mystic Artifact: Using the Artifact requires you to spend one point from your Mana Pool.

Gifted: When using your Specialization's Magic, regardless of the use, you gain one bonus die.

Flexibility: You gain one bonus die on Agility Tests.

Enhanced Transformation: Transforming is a non-action.

Disguise Artifact: You may activate this by spending one mana as part of a Hide Action to grant yourself two bonus die on the Agility Test.

Blood Magic: You can choose to forgo spending mana to use Magic, instead taking one wound per mana you would have spent.

Enhanced Outfit: Your Outfit gains one additional point of Damage Reduction.

Healing Artifact: You may spend an Action using this Artifact to heal a wound at the cost of two mana. You may also use this to heal a permanent wound, which could not normally be healed, though it takes a great deal of time and mana to do so – the user of the Artifact is drained of mana for the duration, which can be from one hour at the least severe, to a full day for loss of limb.

Sorcery: Objects created with a form of sorcery (such as ofuda, or runescribed wands) use the stats of their creators rather than the stats of their wielders for the Magic Test to use them, though no mana can be used to augment the spells involved.

Awareness: When rolling initiative, you treat all of your dice as if you had rolled a 10, regardless of what they come up. You can always tell something is up if someone is using a Disguise Artifact, and if monsters are hiding, you will be able to tell that they are present, though not necessarily their location.